

OUTRAGE ON AN AMERICAN SHIP AT HONG KONG.

AN AMERICAN VESSEL BOARDED BY BLACKS.

Spirited Conduct of the Commander of
the Powhatan.

American Consul Arrested and Dragged
Through the Streets by the Police.

SENSATION IN CHINA,

 &c., &c., &c.

Our Hong Kong Correspondence.
HONG KONG, Oct. 31, 1856.
Outrage upon the American Flag.
One of the most wanton and unprovoked outrages oc-
curred in this harbor a few days since, on board the

American bark Reindeer, Capt. Nichols.

A man named John Madison, who shipped in New York for the sum of \$25 per month, and received the usual advice, signed the shipping articles and crew list, giving New York as his birthplace, and to be discharged on the return of the vessel to that place. Upon the arrival in the harbor, said Madison deserted her, escaped to the shore, and was taken up by the police. The captain thereupon applied to the United States Consul, who caused him arrested, and sent on board as a deserter, as will appear by the accompanying letter of our Consul; and the note referred to in said letter (marked A) was a request to the Superintendent of Police (as has always been the case) to have Madison returned to the Reindeer, which request was not noticed, but treated with contempt. Subsequently, however, the deserter returned to his ship, after having made arrangements with the black police to the effect that the (Madison) would go on board, but would not go to duty, and, as a natural consequence, he would be put in irons—stating, at the same time, that if he was not on shore by a certain time, where (the police) should come on board and take him on shore—all of which transpired just as he (Madison) predicted.

On the 20th—the day that Madison was put in irons, and during the day of the 21st, Capt. Nichols—party of armed black men on board and seized the Madison, from confinement, and took him from the vessel. The mate being at that time in command of the Reindeer, demanded of the person who appeared to be in charge of the desperadoes, to see his warrant, or authority; upon which he slapped his own chest, and yelled out: "I am the authority, and if you interfere I'll take you, also;" and the man Madison was taken on shore and set at liberty.

I shall not pursue the conduct of the mob law officers any further, but refer you to the accompanying official letters, though I may be permitted to draw your

Attention to some of the leading points of the case. Immediately after the first place, an American ship arrives in the harbor of Hong Kong, one of the crew, or more, as the case might be, desert the ship, and subsequently return on board with the avowed determination not to do any duty, but to overthrow the discipline of the ship. The consequence is that they have to refuse duty and threaten (as was the case in this instance) to "kill any American son of a bitch who dares to lay his hands upon him," or them, as the case may be, are finally overpowered and put in irons for the breach of discipline of the ship and threatening the lives of the captain and his officers.

The next thing we hear is, that the ship has been boarded and the pilot-crew liberated and taken on shore as if they were armed men, as if they were policemen, but showing no authority for their acts, and threatening the officers in command of the ship during the absence of the master, for daring to ask them for their warrant or authority. The next step in the drama is the arrest of the captain by a warrant obtained by the man Madison, who

and two weeks in a straiter, and in face of his protest and the fact that the American Consul, and without making any reference, but protesting that he had not laid himself liable for the consequences—our Consul also expostulating against the proceedings—being illegal and unwarrantable—until, in the face of all, our Captain Nichols was obliged to pay a fine of seventy-five dollars, and the Queen and twenty-five for the man Madison, and to receive his discharge in the bargain—or in default of payment, Captain Nichols was informed that he must go to jail, and, in addition, board himself. What a pretty state of affairs to ask any impartial man—whether red, white or black, it is a description. Captain Nichols, however, succeeded in removing the two Chinese from the boat, and in obtaining the black police in hot pursuit, but unable to overtake them. The Chinese in the boat into which Captain Nichols refused to allow them to go, were taken to the shore, refused to walk when so ordered by the black police, and two noble better Americans—Captains Paul and Spicer, who would rather expend their last drop of blood than allow a Chinaman to be treated in that manner, stepped in, seized the cars and pulled in safety to the Powhatan, discharging in the race the best containing the police, although they had three times as many. Our Consul, in the meantime, had been informed by the Chinese Consul, and stated the circumstances to Captain McCune, requesting him at the same time to afford Captain Nichols the proper protection; whereupon our Consul measured Consul Keenan that he would give Captain Nichols the necessary protection, notwithstanding there were at that time two other United States frigates and three gunboats in the harbor, and the sailing of the steamers; that, however, the sailing of the steamers, that Captain McCune, who was nobly supported

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captain Mr. Sear, an American, and one-third owner of the ship, who furnished the necessary funds for his liquidation, thereby giving a color of legality to what was done. The vessel was then taken to the wharf where in her which the fine was received—it having been paid to a policeman instead of the clerk of the court, as is customary, gave unmistakable evidence of their illegality. The vessel was then taken to the wharf of the vicinity of Hong Kong and Canton were highly, and very properly so, indignant at the payment of the fine, and I must say that the individual who authorized its payment was a man who had no sympathies of all high-minded and noble-hearted Americans. The matter is of more importance than might appear at first sight, and one that requires the immediate attention of your government, for should such a case passed over in silence, it would not be long before our country's Secretary of State—it would not be long before the relation upon British vessels in the port of San Francisco would outstrip anything of the kind on record. There would be no more to be said, and the matter would be difficult to conjecture. If the proceedings in the case of Capt. Nichols on board the Retriever were legal and correct, the petty British authorities would have no right to detain the vessel, and to keep the crew out of her, and leave the ship at the mercy

the element therefore there is no safety for the owner of a ship, or the Captain. The offense, if such it was, was not a petty one, and it was not a crime, but it was in connection with the discipline of the ship, and was recognized by the laws of the United States, and properly came under the jurisdiction of the American consul. It was a very negligible offense, and it is so in all the ports of our American shipping, and then it is very unnecessary, as well as very expensive, to send consuls abroad, when American shipping interests are at the mercy of a petty foreign official, who can change at will. I am informed that heretofore ship masters have been informed that heretofore they must take their papers to the police officers in foreign ports, and request them to please be so good as not to be too hard on them—this means they mean they must take all the blame and console, must now bring my remarks to the consuls; but before doing so, permit me to say that our country's honor has not been compromised, and that the honor of our country is not in the hands of the nation assumed by our worthy Consul, General James Keenan, and Captain William J. McNamee of the Powhatan, and that bestowing any noble, high minded consideration on the subject of the Powhatan would have been unpurposed under the circumstances. Consul Keenan is a man possessing the energy, the will and the determi-

tion to assert the rights of an American citizen that may come within his jurisdiction. He is an old Mexican campaigner, and not to be trifled with.

CONSUL KEENAN TO CAPTAIN MC'LUNEY.
UNITED STATES CONSULATE,
HONG KONG, Oct. 23, 1855.

Sir—On the 12th inst. Capt. Francis M. Smith, of the American bark *Enterprise*, reported to this consulate that he had on board a man named John A. Mc'Lune, who had been arrested by the Chinese authorities on the 10th inst. and was now in custody of the Chinese authorities.